

Tuesday, August 22, 2023

Dear Pediatric Providers:

On October 28, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its blood lead reference value (BLRV) from 5µg/dL to 3.5µg/dL in response to the Lead Exposure Prevention and Advisory Committee (LEPAC) recommendation made on May 14, 2021. The BLRV is intended to identify children with higher levels of lead in their blood compared to most children, based on the 97.5th percentile of the blood lead level (BLL) distribution in U.S. children ages 1 to 5 years old. Since there is no safe level of lead, this action by CDC is a reminder of how important it is for early blood lead testing, so parents can take steps to keep their children safe from the toxic and irreversible effects of lead exposure.

Snohomish County Health Department is following the recommendations of the CDC for public health case management services for families who have children with lead levels at 3.5µg/dL or higher. Washington State Department of Health (WA DOH) continues with the BLRV of 5µg/dL until the process of revising the Notifiable Conditions Rule in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) is complete. Considering that disparities in lead exposure and poisoning point to the need for public health action that prioritizes moving the needle of equity forward, and that counties are able to respond at a lower BLRV, following this new reference value allows us to:

- Focus resources on children with the highest levels of lead in their blood compared with levels in most children in that age range
- Identify and eliminate sources of lead exposure
- Take more prompt actions to reduce the harmful effects of lead

The Snohomish County Health Department's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program is in the process of completing an online toolkit for healthcare providers as a resource. The resource will be shared widely once completed.

[Resources for Healthcare Providers | Snohomish County Health Department, WA \(snohd.org\)](https://www.snohd.org/resources-for-healthcare-providers)

For more information from the CDC, visit: [CDC updates blood lead reference value](https://www.cdc.gov/lead/) | [Lead](#) | [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/)

Thank you,



James Lewis
Health Officer